DC
2 of 3
ABSOLUTE POWER
ORIGINS
RISE OF THE SUICIDE SQUAD
RIDLEY
MARTINEZ
RAPMUND
DALHOUSE
13+
TEEN
TIE-IN SERIES TO THE BLOCKBUSTER ABSOLUTE POWER EVENT!

LAST STAND ON PARADISE ISLAND!

ABSOLUTE POWER #3

POWERLESS HEROES TEAM WITH ELITE AMAZONS IN THE LATEST BLOCKBUSTER CHAPTER FROM **MARK WAID** and **DAN MORA!**

SEPTEMBER

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JON KENT FIGHTS BACK AS ABSOLUTE POWER CONTINUES

SEPTEMBER:

ABSOLUTE POWER #3

ABSOLUTE POWER: TASK FORCE VII #6

ABSOLUTE POWER: SUPER SON #1

ABSOLUTE POWER: TASK FORCE VII #7

ABSOLUTE POWER: ORIGINS #3

TIE-INS:

BATMAN #152

GREEN LANTERN #15

SUPERMAN #18

WONDER WOMAN #13

GREEN ARROW #16

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DON'T MISS THE FATEFUL FINALE IN OCTOBER!

SQUAD UP

John Ridley, Writer Alitha Martinez, Penciller Norm Rapmund, Inker Andrew Dalhouse, Colors
Steve Wands, Letters Edwin Galmon & Pasquale Ferrera, Cover Mateus Manhanini, Variant Covers
Marquis Draper, Associate Editor Paul Kaminski, Editor
Superman created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, by special arrangement with the Jerry Siegel family.

AMANDA WALLER STANDS ON THE CUSP OF ABSOLUTE POWER IN THE DC UNIVERSE...BUT HER TRUE MOTIVATIONS LIE IN THE MYSTERIES OF HER ORIGIN. MYSTERIES AT LAST REVEALED...

"...THEY DROP THE COMMON ENEMY INTO THE STORY."
POLICE
POLICE

"MORE THAN JUST A VILLAIN, THE COMMON ENEMY REPRESENTS AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT.
"A THREAT TO OUR VERY EXISTENCE. AND ONE THING YOU CAN DEPEND ON...
"PEOPLE LIKE EXISTING.
"GIVEN THE CHOICE, THEY WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SURVIVE..."

"...INCLUDING HANDING OVER THEIR OWN SELF-DETERMINATION.
"THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY FRIEND, RIGHT?
"SURE. BUT AFTER THAT, ONCE *THEY* HAVE THEIR LITTLE SELF-STYLED *JUSTICE LEAGUE*...THEN WHO'S GOT ALL THE POWER?

NOT *THE PEOPLE.* THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE.
IT'S JUST AGITPROP, NOTHING MORE. EVEN THE NOMENCLATURE--SO PERFECTLY DEPLOYED. FROM *VIGILANTE* TO *HERO* TO *SUPERHERO.* ALL SO CAREFULLY CRAFTED TO MAKE US BELIEVE THEY'RE ON OUR SIDE.
AND THE PEOPLE DOING THE CRAFTING...THEY DOG-WHISTLE ABOUT LAW AND ORDER...BUT FOR WHO? WHOSE "ORDER"?
NOT MINE. NOT YOURS.
BUT IT'S REGULAR PEOPLE, PEOPLE LIKE ME AND YOU, WHO END UP PAYING THE PRICE.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, *CLARENCE?*
HOW...DID YOU KNOW MY NAME IS--
IT'S *LITERALLY* MY JOB TO KNOW. AND YOU DESERVE TO BE CALLED BY YOUR *REAL* NAME. NOT THAT OTHER &$@# THEY SLAPPED ON YOU...

...CYCLOTRON.
BUT YOU'RE NOT CYCLOTRON. YOU'RE CLARENCE SIMMS. BORN INTO BAD CIRCUMSTANCES. NEVER CAUGHT A BREAK. DID A STRETCH ON AN ARMED ROBBERY CHARGE...
I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT ANYBODY. I JUST--
YOU WERE ONLY TRYING TO GET SOME MONEY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR FAMILY.
MY HUSBAND TRIED TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY.
...THEY ENDED UP CALLING HIM A CRIMINAL, TOO...
AFTER YOU GOT OUT OF PRISON YOU TRIED TO DO THINGS THE RIGHT WAY. ANSWERED AN ONLINE AD--A TECH COMPANY DOING EXPERIMENTS IN POSTHUMANISM.
WHAT WAS THAT THING THEY PUT IN YOU...?
A SELF-POWERED CYCLOTRONIC NEURAL NETWORK.
MORE LIKE A BOMB. NEVER TRUST THE BETA VERSION OF SOME STUFF TECH BROS PUSH ON YOU.
ANYWAY, AS I UNDERSTAND, THEY COULDN'T GET THE THING OUT. NOT WITHOUT IT GOING OFF.
HARD AS HELL TO GET A REGULAR JOB WHEN YOU'VE GOT AN UNSTABLE CYCLO-TRON IN YOUR BODY.
SO YOU FIGURE, WHAT THE HELL...? YOU WALK INTO A BANK, TELL 'EM YOU HAVE AN EXPLOSIVE, AND THEY BETTER FORK OVER SOME DOUGH BEFORE THINGS GET REAL.
WAS THE TRUTH. ...EVEN IF I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO SET IT OFF.

SAME AS WITH MY HUSBAND, CLARENCE, YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO DO RIGHT BY YOUR FAMILY.
BUT OTHER PEOPLE GET TO DECIDE WHO'S THE HERO AND WHO'S THE VILLAIN. AND WHEN THE PUBLIC FINALLY FIGURES OUT THEIR HEROES ARE THE VILLAINS...IT'LL BE TOO LATE.
WELL, IT WOULD BE TOO LATE. BUT I CAN SEE THE FUTURE. AND IN OUR FUTURE, CLARENCE, WE'RE THE HEROES.
...WE...?
YOU. ME. TASK FORCE X.
...I DON'T...I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT--
I KNOW, CLARENCE. ALL OF THIS IS OVERWHELMING. BUT THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT WHO ARE PREPARING FOR THE COMING WAR AGAINST THE MASKS.
FIRST WE NEED TO DEMONSTRATE THE VIABILITY OF MY...WELL, THE OFFICIAL DESIGNATION IS TASK FORCE X.
YOU, CLARENCE, ARE KEY TO THAT SUCCESS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
TOLDJA, IT'S MY JOB TO KNOW. YOU ARE THE HERO OF THIS NARRATIVE.
YOUR GREATNESS IS INSIDE YOU. WHEN THE TIME COMES...

"...WE WILL SHOW YOUR GREATNESS TO THE WORLD."
THE TAX OFFICE
DANTE JIMÉNEZ CPA
Save time & money
STORE HOURS
HEY, HOW ARE YOU? I'M DANTE.
DANTE... AMANDA WALLER.
WAIT... AMANDA WALLER? YOU'RE--
YES. I AM. I WANT YOU TO LOOK AT SOMETHING.
...HOW, HOW DID YOU--
BECAUSE I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, DANTE.
AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN HIDE FROM ME. NOTHING.
I DON'T THINK I'LL BE SEEING YOU AGAIN.
PROTECT THE PEOPLE, I TELL THEM.
I TELL THEM THAT EVERYTHING ELSE...

IS DETAILS.
AND THE DETAILS? I TELL THESE PEOPLE--MISFITS THE REST OF SOCIETY HAS DISCARDED AS THUGS--THAT THEY CAN BE MORE THAN WHAT THEY ARE.
AS PART OF TASK FORCE X, THEY CAN WIELD THEIR POWER IN SERVICE OF THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS: THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION.
AND WHEN THE SO-CALLED HEROES ARE EXPOSED AS OPPRESSORS, THEN THEY THEMSELVES CAN RECLAIM THE WORD JUSTICE.

AND THEY BOUGHT IT. I MEAN... AFTER LIFE PUNCHES YOU IN THE %#$%# A FEW TIMES, A KICK IN THE TEETH FEELS LIKE A KISS ON THE LIPS.

WELL, MOST OF THEM BOUGHT.
HEY, UH...SQUAT-ZILLA, THE REST OF THESE BODY FLUID RECEPTACLES MIGHT BUY YOUR WE BE JUSTICE #$%# SALAD, BUT I'M NOT EATIN' THAT CRAP.
I'M SORRY YOU FEEL THAT WAY, LOBO. I KNOW THAT OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TEAM, PARTICULARLY CLARENCE--
CLARENCE? WHO THE FRAG IS--
--SEE THE VALUE IN ENSURING THE SUCCESS OF TASK FORCE X'S FIRST MISSION.
YEAH. HEADING TO NORTH COMMIE-STAN OR WHATEVER AND DROP-KICKING THEIR SUPER-SOCIALIST @#$#@$%.
BUT THAT'S GREAT YOU GOT CLARENCE THINKING HE CAN BE A HERO.
CLARENCE CAN BE A HERO. LIKE ALL HEROES, HIS GREATEST POWER IS LITERALLY WITHIN HIMSELF.
HE CAN BE A HERO FROM NOW UNTIL FRAGTOBER. ALL I CARE ABOUT IS GETTING PAID.
WELL...EMBRACING THE NATURE OF ONE'S MOTIVATIONS IS ITS OWN KIND OF SUPERPOWER.
THIS...THIS IS HOW IT BEGINS.

THE FIRST MISSION OF TASK FORCE X
I SEND THEM TO...WELL, LIKE LOBO SAID: "NORTH COMMIE-STAN, OR WHATEVER" HOME OF THE DICTATOR HIS PEOPLE CALL THE GREAT SUN.
THE PEOPLE CALLED THEIR LEADER MANY WONDERFUL THINGS BECAUSE IF THEY DIDN'T, THE GREAT SUN'S HEROES PUNISHED DISSENT WITH THEIR ABSOLUTE POWER

NOTHING I COULD DO FOR THE GREAT SUN'S PEOPLE. YEAH, I'D SOLD TASK FORCE X ON A MISSION OF LIBERATION.
...BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME OR INCLINATION TO LIBERATE SOME OTHER POPULATION. ONLY THING I CARED ABOUT...
THE GOD ENGINE. CAUGHT UP IN A SUPERHERO ARMS RACE, THE GREAT SUN HAD USED THE GOD ENGINE TO CREATE HIS OWN METAHUMAN ARMY.
IN MY HANDS...? IT COULD SECURE OUR FUTURE.
EXCEPT...
STANZ...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AUDIO? WHERE'S THE IMAGE?
...SOME KIND OF INTERFERENCE. LOW-LEVEL RADIATION... MAYBE IT'S THE GOD ENGINE.
THE GOD ENGINE OPERATES ON PSIONIC ENERGY. IT WOULDN'T...
...HE'S BLOCKING US ON PURPOSE...
WHO'S BLOCKING US?
GET ME AUDIO! I NEED TO HEAR THEM!
MA'AM!

FILTERING THE RADIATION...
THIS LADY WALLER...TO HER, WE'RE ALL DISPOSABLE. WE'RE NOT A TASK FORCE. WE'RE DEAD-ENDERS. SUICIDERS.
ALL THAT JUNK SHE'S OFFERING US? PARDONS? IT'S NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT WE COULD TAKE OURSELVES.
GET ME AN IMAGE, STANZ!
TAPPING INTO CCTV. PULLING IT UP...
...NOW!
WE DON'T HAVE TO BE ANYONE'S PUPPETS. NOT ANYMORE. WE CAN BE DIVINE WRATH!
CLARENCE. THAT LITTLE #%@&! I'D TAKEN HIS KINDNESS FOR WEAKNESS. NOW HE'S ABOUT TO DESTROY EVERY SINGLE THING I'D WORKED FOR.
THESE MASKS. ALL OF THEM-- SO CLEVER. SO DAMN CLEVER.
BUT THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS.
...AND WHEN IT COMES TO DETAILS.

I AM HELL ON EARTH.
LOBO, IT'S WALLER! LISTEN TO ME, DAMMIT!
I NEED YOU TO KILL CYCLOTRON.
WHAT? WHY?
BECAUSE I'LL DOUBLE YOUR MONEY.
...OH GOD...
HEH...!

...I'M, UH... I'M NOT PICKING UP ANY SIGNS OF LIFE...
SEND A CLEAN TEAM. MAKE SURE.
AND GET RID OF ANYTHING THAT EVEN IMPLIES "KILROY" WAS THERE.

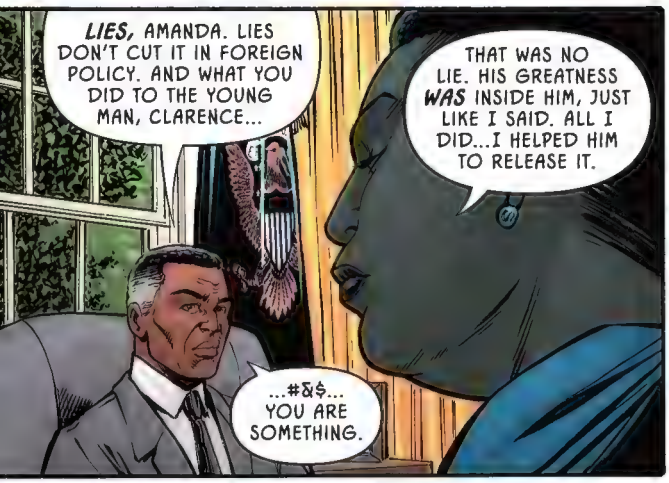
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?
GO HOME. ...AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO SPIN THIS TO THE PRESIDENT.

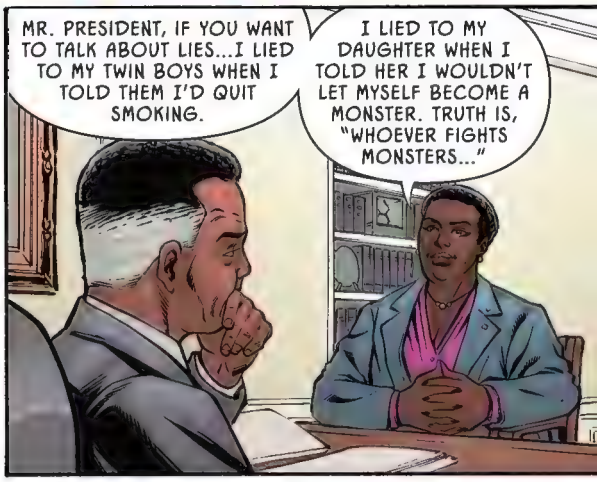
WHAT DID YOU DO...?
CORETTA...
WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO, MOM...?
I DID WHAT I HAD TO DO.
I CAN BARELY EVER GET TIME WITH YOU. BARELY EVER TALK TO YOU--
I'VE BEEN BUSY.
HOW DID YOU EVEN KNOW DANTE ASKED ME TO MAR--
WHAT AM I SAYING? OF COURSE YOU KNEW.
SO...YOU DECIDE TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO MY FIANCÉ BY THREATENING HIM?

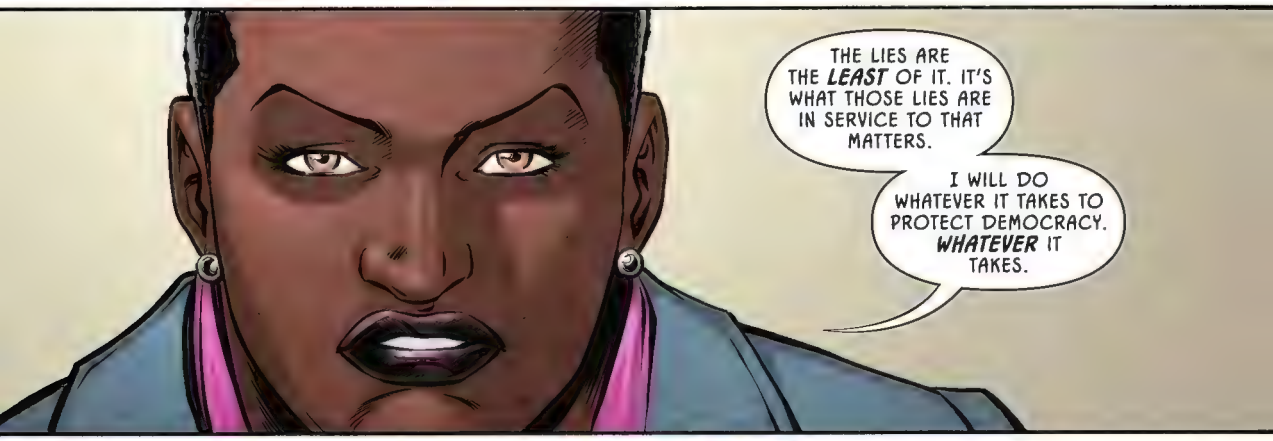
I MADE NO THREATS. I TOLD HIM I'M AWARE OF HIS ISSUES, AND THAT HE CAN'T KEEP SECRETS FROM ME.
DANTE DOESN'T HAVE "SECRETS." HE SHARES EVERYTHING WITH ME. I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM.
THINKING YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT A PERSON AND ACTUALLY KNOWING EVERYTHING ARE NOT THE SAME.
WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?
I DID WHAT ANY MOTHER WOULD DO: MADE SURE HER DAUGHTER DOESN'T GET HERSELF INTO A DANGEROUS SITUATION.
IT'S NOT A "SITUATION," MOM. IT'S A MARRIAGE! AND WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IT OR NOT, DANTE IS A GOOD MAN.
IT'S NOT ABOUT GOOD OR BAD. I DON'T MAKE THOSE DISTINCTIONS. NOT ANYMORE.
CAN HE CONTROL HIMSELF? CAN HE CONTROL HIS IMPULSES? CAN HE CONTROL A SITUATION?
THAT'S WHAT LIFE'S ABOUT: CONTROL. I HAD TO LEARN THE HARD WAY. I HAD TO LEARN, BECAUSE HE...HE COULDN'T...
...YOUR FATHER COULDN'T CONTROL HIMSELF...

...IT'S DAD. ALL THIS, ALL YOUR WORK...IT'S ABOUT HIM. YOU HATE DAD FOR LEAVING US.
NO. THAT'S NOT TRUE. I DO NOT HATE HIM.
I APPRECIATE HE WAS WILLING TO GIVE HIS LIFE FOR THE THINGS THAT MATTERED MOST.
AND IF I DON'T DO THE SAME, THEN HE DIED FOR NOTHING.
MOM...I NEED YOU TO PROMISE ME YOU WON'T LET WHAT YOU'RE DOING OVERWHELM YOU LIKE IT DID WHEN DAD DIED. YOU CAN'T LET IT TURN YOU INTO A MONSTER.
...I WON'T. I SWEAR I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
BUT I NEED YOU TO PROMISE ME SOMETHING...
...IT'S A HARD WORLD OUT THERE, CORETTA. HARDER THAN YOU KNOW. AND ALL THIS SUPERHERO PSYCHODRAMA...
BABY, IT'S JUST THE WARM-UP ACT. BAD THINGS ARE COMING. SO PROMISE ME YOU WON'T BE NAIVE. THAT YOU'LL ALWAYS LEARN THE TRUTH FOR YOURSELF.
NO MATTER HOW UGLY IT IS, IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE ABILITY TO CONFRONT THE TRUTH WHO SURVIVE.
...I PROMISE...
"THIS IS WHAT I CALL SUCCESS."

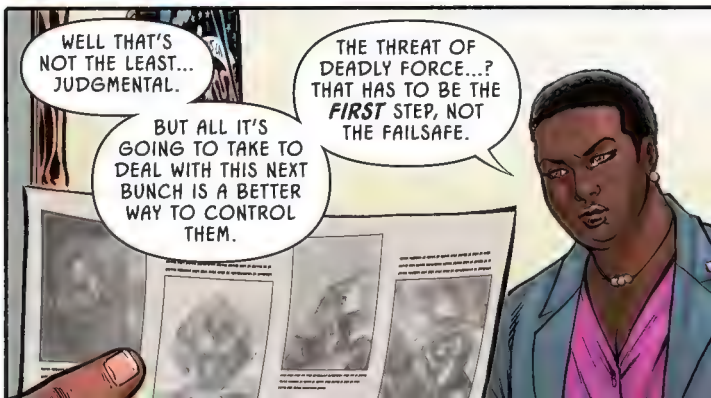
SUCCESS? YOU LOST THE GOD ENGINE. AND ROGUE NATION OR NOT, YOU SET OFF A NUCLEAR-LEVEL EXPLOSION IN A SOVEREIGN STATE.
MR. PRESIDENT, WE PROVED THAT WITH ENOUGH FIREPOWER, EVEN THE MOST STACKED MASKS CAN BE CONTROLLED.
AND FROM WHAT I'M SEEING ON CABLE NEWS, ALL THAT HAPPENED IS THAT A ROGUE NATION ACCIDENTALLY DETONATED ONE OF ITS OWN SUBSTANDARD NUCLEAR DEVICES.


LIES, AMANDA. LIES DON'T CUT IT IN FOREIGN POLICY. AND WHAT YOU DID TO THE YOUNG MAN, CLARENCE...
THAT WAS NO LIE. HIS GREATNESS WAS INSIDE HIM, JUST LIKE I SAID. ALL I DID...I HELPED HIM TO RELEASE IT.
...#&$... YOU ARE SOMETHING.


MR. PRESIDENT, IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT LIES...I LIED TO MY TWIN BOYS WHEN I TOLD THEM I'D QUIT SMOKING.
I LIED TO MY DAUGHTER WHEN I TOLD HER I WOULDN'T LET MYSELF BECOME A MONSTER. TRUTH IS, "WHOEVER FIGHTS MONSTERS..."


THE LIES ARE THE LEAST OF IT. IT'S WHAT THOSE LIES ARE IN SERVICE TO THAT MATTERS.
I WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO PROTECT DEMOCRACY. WHATEVER IT TAKES.

IT'S GOING TO TAKE A LOT MORE THAN SMOOTH TALK TO HANDLE YOUR NEXT BUNCH OF RECRUITS. PSYCHOPATHS AND LOSERS. ALL OF THEM.


WELL THAT'S NOT THE LEAST... JUDGMENTAL.
BUT ALL IT'S GOING TO TAKE TO DEAL WITH THIS NEXT BUNCH IS A BETTER WAY TO CONTROL THEM.
THE THREAT OF DEADLY FORCE...? THAT HAS TO BE THE FIRST STEP, NOT THE FAILSAFE.

"THEY HAVE TO KNOW FROM THE JUMP WHO'S IN CHARGE, AND WHO IS IN CONTROL."
WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR ME, STANZ?
IT'S A FULLY FUNCTIONING PROTOTYPE. WE'VE TESTED IT...AS MUCH AS YOU CAN TEST SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT RETRIEVING CLARENCE'S BODY. WE WERE ABLE TO REPURPOSE HIS CYCLOTRONIC NEURAL NET.
THIS DEVICE ACTUALLY ABSORBS AND MATCHES METAS' BIOELECTRIC PULSES.
MEANING...?
MEANING IT NEGATES THEIR ABILITIES. WHEN THIS BABY DOES ITS THING... SUPERPOWERS WON'T HELP THE MASKS NONE.
SO...WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I THINK CLARENCE SIMMS IS THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME.
NEXT: THE WALL VS. THE BAT

REMEMBERING AN ICON
TRINA ROBBINS
1938-2024
Trina Robbins
WELL, I'VE BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS A FEW YEARS.
IT WOULD BE GROSSLY NAIVE AND PRESUMPTUOUS TO THINK THAT A COMIC BOOK CAN CHANGE THE WORLD'S THINKING.
--BUT IT DOESN'T HURT TO TRY.
FROM A STORY WRITTEN BY GEORGE PÉREZ, DRAWN BY RAMONA FRADON, COLORED BY SHELLEY EIBER, AND LETTERED BY CARRIE SPIEGLE
IN HONOR OF
TRINA ROBBINS.

ALL IN

Oversize one-shot flipbook on sale in **OCTOBER**

Darkseid is. Two universes.

Darkseid was. One prophecy.

IT ALL STARTS IN
DC ALL IN SPECIAL #1

JOSHUA WILLIAMSON • SCOTT SNYDER
DANIEL SAMPERE • WES CRAIG

INTERVIEW WITH GREG SMALLWOOD

In a world where unspeakable beasts slither through silent temples, only one man has the strength of will and brute force to protect the people...the fearsome, blade-wielding Batman. But when an all-seeing Oracle warns him of a shadow creeping across the land, he will have to contend with foes that can't be dispatched by sword alone. DC Nation sat down with Eisner Award-winning artist Greg Smallwood to discuss both writing and illustrating this Elseworlds epic.

What does it mean to be contributing to the relaunch of the iconic Elseworlds line?

Well, the comic obviously draws inspiration from those classic Elseworlds tales I grew up with. It's a unique thrill to be able to play in the DC sandbox with characters like Batman while also having the freedom to take them into entirely new realms and situations. That blend of deep lore and imaginative exploration is what makes Elseworlds so exciting.

What has it been like to not only draw this story, but write it as well?

Writing and drawing this story has been a blast. My previous DC project, *The Human Target*, was a perfect match for my artistic style, as its noir aesthetic aligned with my sensibilities. However, when it comes to sword and sorcery, I knew that not every aspect of the genre would naturally gel with me as an artist or visual storyteller. What the writing allows me to do is find that balance between the genre's conventions and my own little idiosyncrasies.

Have you always been a fan of this kind of rugged sword-and-sorcery world, and why do you think it works well for Batman?

I've been a huge fan of sword and sorcery ever since I was a teen, but the big appeal for me is simply the visual aesthetics of the genre. When I was a kid, sword-and-sorcery paperbacks and VHS boxes would always catch my eye; the amazing covers promised grand epics with spellbinding visuals and captivating characters. My goal with *Batman the Barbarian* is to deliver on that promise.

Can you tease fans with your favorite scene from the first issue?

We've seen Batman's origin countless times, but it was really fun to put my own spin on it. I won't say any more than that.

Can you describe this series in five words?

Visceral, raw, and action-packed.

DON'T MISS *BATMAN THE BARBARIAN* #1, ON SALE THIS SEPTEMBER!

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